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NOTES AND ABSTRACTS

A Challenge to Socialism. II. On Social Justice and Evolution.—The socialists have committed a fundamental error in supposing that the evolution of human society and civilization embracing the most diverse factors can be narrowed down to a purely economic and industrial evolution, and this only as pertaining to the great mass of manual laborers and artisans. Man is a being with an *ideal* and he adapts himself to this in conformity with the pressure of his various environment. Socialism ignores the gradualness of this evolution. Social justice must grow out of the entire complex of the relations in which men stand to each other and to the functions they perform; it cannot be stamped upon from the outside. Its elements are *power, authority, custom, and prestige*, and the *ideal of right*. We must get away from the Rousseauan dictum that all men are equal.

Besides, as a mere strategic move, the socialists have, as object in narrowing human evolution down to the merely industrial, the insistence that, since the workers produced all surplus values, they should also be the rulers and displace the statesmen, inventors, scientists, captains of industry, etc. But as a matter of fact, even admitting this narrow interpretation of human evolution, the great social and economic advances from serfdom were mainly accomplished by men outside the ranks for the ranks in pursuit of an *ideal*. The socialists attack the family because it lies in the way of abolishing the gradualness of human evolution. One plan is to do away with individual families and to make the race over into a series of generations or great families whose members shall bear the artificial stamp of political and industrial equality, other interests being ignored. The church tried this assumption of equality and found it failed, because conflict is necessary to life and to the formation of an ideal. Justice has meaning only in connection with inequality. Another scheme of theirs is an attempt at a strictly scientific economic doctrine based on equal reward for "average labor time." The result of this, if carried out, would be to put a premium upon doing things in the longest time and slowest way, rather than to invent improved methods for doing things better and more rapidly. It leaves out of consideration exceptional ability and knowledge, to which it offers no incentive.

Socialist agitation has reached the present high stage because of conditions of unemployment. This, however, is not due to capitalism but to the Rousseauan and Smithian doctrines of *laissez faire*.—J. B. Crozier, *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1908. L. L. B.

Social Justice and Evolution.—[Reply to Dr. Crozier's article.] Dr. Crozier unfortunately confines himself to a consideration of pioneer socialism which was often hasty and immature. Present-day socialism is not perfected but represents an efficient progression. Dr. Crozier is utterly wrong in claiming that socialists urge the industrial question as the one problem of human evolution. They merely say it is the fundamental factor. Further, his own theory of human evolution—modification under pressure from a changing environment—is identically that of socialism. This modification demands industrial and social reorganization and this reorganization must be socialism. The industrial revolution added a third class, the capitalist, to the lauded and laudless classes. Despite the individualistic theories of the economics of the time, the workers immediately began a successful and many-sided agitation for suffrage rights, with a view to getting a more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunity, and a larger measure of social justice.

The general tendency of ameliorative legislation and government during the present economic era has been toward socialism; the chief work of law and

government during the last half-century has been to adjust the relations between classes, and in the interests and welfare of the general mass. The private ownership of the means of production, including land, is not in harmony with the co-operative working of the instruments of production, and it is to this fact socialists attribute the injustice and evils of our social order. Since the beginning of the nineteenth century all have sought, through legislation and administration, for social justice by restricting individual freedom to own and use private property. The righteous revolt of the oppressed against the social justice of the time has in all ages been the most potent factor in human evolution. With the coming of the workmen into politics, the same thing is happening—a demand for the removal of the social injustice which oppresses them, and when the political enfranchisement of the people is complete, the political democracy will establish an equal standard of social justice throughout socialism. The contention that most of the economic and social advantages of the "herd" have been conferred from above is not supported by history. Nor does modern socialism wish to dispense with statesmen, scientists, and inventors; but it does maintain there is no distinction in original ability between the classes. Social advantages are the result of economic advantages. Socialism, therefore, aims at the establishment of equality of opportunity (not equality of individuals) which must be founded upon economic justice. Economic justice results in social justice. Under this order the winners will not be those who have trampled others in the race, but those who have scattered most of the seeds of helplessness as they passed along.—Philip Snowden, *Fortnightly Review*, April, 1908. L. L. B.

The Psychology of the Yellow Journal.—The yellow journal appeals to the fundamental impulses little amenable to intellectual oversight. Man is a social animal only from necessity; his primitive interests are selfish. The family relationships with children and comradeship among men with common interests have socialized man, the latter coming to have increasingly a broader basis. This primitive or hunting pattern of interest is never eradicated, but appears anew in children of each generation. The yellow journal owes its existence to this hereditary perpetuation of insidious attitudes in its readers. Men injured by the press are not rehabilitated by it; it is not interesting or profitable to confess mistakes. The yellow journal deals in pleasurable shocks, based primarily upon satisfaction in the misfortune of others. It reproduces for the delectation of its readers those immoralities which it condemns. It has its hold on the masses because the popular mind is essentially childish. Also the material comes cheap, owing to the support of advertising. The yellow journal is immoral because it is unfavorable to the control or adjustment of society, giving, instead, abnormal suggestions under cover of reliable information. This is made more readily possible because of the traditional respect in which printed things are held. Consequently the daily press has become an almost negligible factor from the scientific standpoint, because of its untruthfulness. It conspires by its exaggeration and misrepresentation to render knowledge esoteric and sterile. It is, through its constant bringing of the abnormal into the attention, the agent of vice and crime. Progress in civilization works slowly because we generalize new situations slowly. One of the new commandments in the revised list will be, "Thou shalt not have the perversion of truth for a gainful occupation." The yellow journal, however, is no worse than its readers want it to be.—W. L. Thomas, *American Magazine*, March, 1908.

L. L. B.